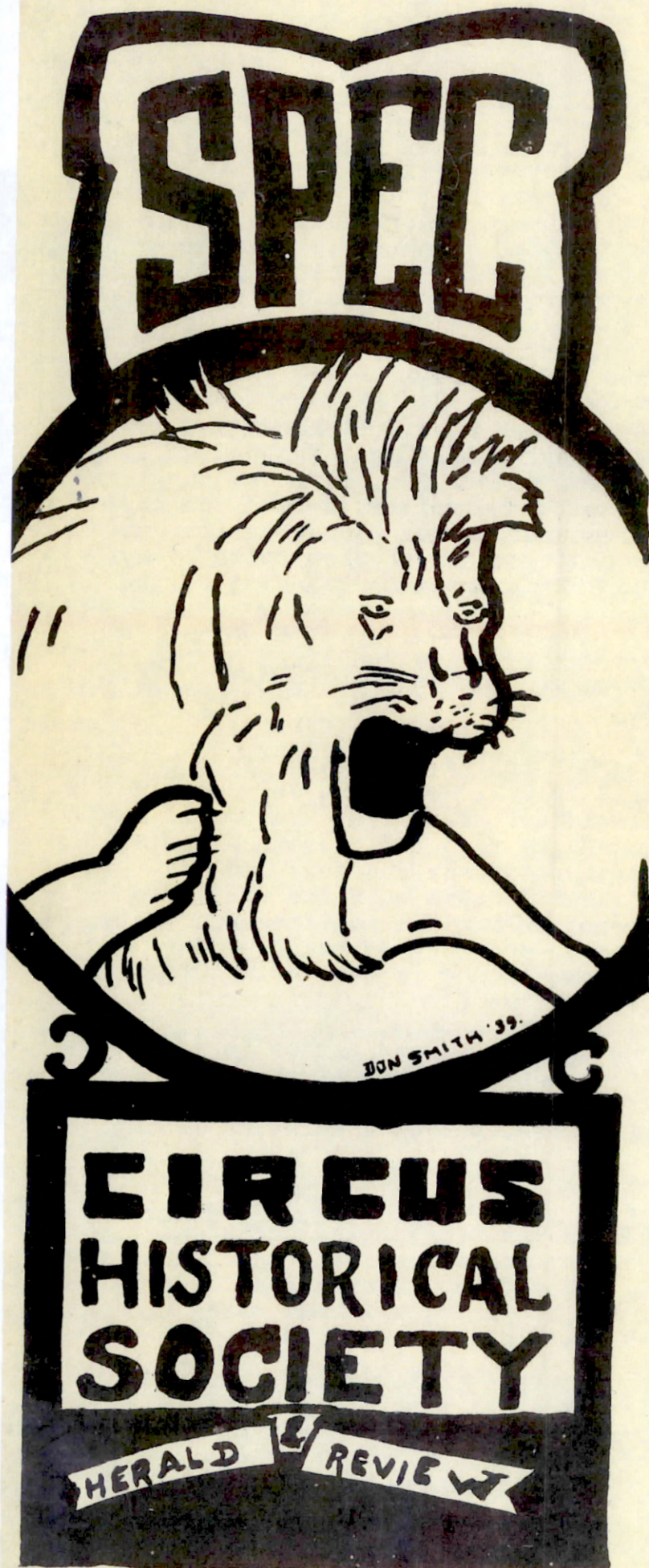


First Call!

With this issue of "SPEC", both a new Publication, and a new Society make their bow. For SPEC will become the official organ of the recently founded CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY, and the only publication ever to bring together under one Big Top, the combined interests of all Circus Collectors, Fans, Performers, Photographers, and Model Builders.

However, no Publication can long survive, which does not have behind it, a responsible group of Sponsors. We believe the CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY has that responsibility, and we hope sincerely that from our present small group may come a great International Society to take its place beside the Circus Saints and Sinners, and the CFA, both of whom are respected in their chosen fields. Despite the growing lack of big shows during recent years, there has been a decided increase in the number of Collectors of Circus Photos, letterheads, programs, route cards, etc. There is also the Circus Model Builders and Owners Association whose hobby is the reproducing of miniature models of their favorite show. Up to now, there has been no definite place for the active Collector of Circusiana to meet, nor any group with which to join. We hope to provide that meeting place among the columns of SPEC, along with Circus news that IS news, authentic articles on older shows, drawings and real photos for your collection.

The CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY does not admit that the great American Circus is dead, nor that it cannot be "saved". We do believe however, that far too many shows have passed away, and left little behind, except their name, although it may have been known in every household just a few short years ago. We believe that somewhere in this land must be a few mementos of the Golden Past, and we trust that it may not be too late for us to gather such material now, to preserve for the future, the Circus of today and yesteryear. To all persons seriously interested in such an undertaking, we bid a cordial welcome. We are not in opposition to anyone, save those who



oppose the Circus, and who do not show it to the best advantage at all times.

We doubt whether a more interested or representative group has ever been banded together in a common cause, than may be found among our original group of 11 members. There is Mrs. Betty Leonard, representing the Performers, and who was, by the way, our very first supporter, following a mention of the proposed organization several years ago. There is Eddie Jackson, who has travelled with Circuses and snapped photos for 14 years; our vice-president, Walter W. Tyson, ardent Canadian Fan; Charlie Campbell, collector and historian of the Show world; Art Stensvad, editor of SPEC, and co-owner of Campbell & Stensvad paper Circus; Bill Green, collector and dealer in Circusiana; Bob Green, former Circus musician and writer; Bill Kasiska, a name we heard almost as early as our first show, and with a wealth of good advice and information; Spencer A. Stine, Washington, D.C. Fan; Walter J. Pietschman, probably our newest fan, but none the less interested. Walt has covered many shows with the writer, during the past two seasons, and is now secretary and treasurer of the CHS. Last but not least, is President Don Smith, friendly photographer of Show Folks everywhere, and managing editor of SPEC during his spare moments. Six of the Charter Members are also active in CFA.

But on with the Show! Bring out your Clowns and Beautiful Ladies, let Lions roar, strike up the Band, for today, the CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY steps out, in SPEC. We hope you'll like it! DS.

The following is strictly not editorial policy, but we believe that the photos of Lemen Bros. Circus, offered by Bill Green are so good, and so reasonable in price, that every collector of historical views will want a set. Regular price is \$1. Which reminds us that Eddie Jackson photos have been used by many writers, during recent years; and Mary Erdlitz chose a photo by Don Smith, for use in the Billboard when she was voted most popular of all girl Elephant Trainers, during the past season. Mary is a mighty sweet girl, and it grieved us no end when we heard of her automobile accident several weeks ago. However she is recovering rapidly, according to reports, and will again be with the Big Show next season.

Greatest thrill of 1939, was on the Cole Bros. Circus lot in Stratford, Ontario, when I stood with Jess Adkins and members of the great Loyal Repenski Troupe, and watched little Clara Delbosq make her debut in a regular performance. Not as a rider of course, but on a swinging ladder, controlled by Justino, star of the troupe. No special announcement had been made, but the eyes of the entire audience were upon her, as she performed feats along with the older girls of the show. Applause was loud and long as she descended, and raced across the ring to the bandstand where we waited and was lovingly embraced by her mother, and hurried away to their private tent. You see, I have counted the Repenskis as my friends since first seeing them on the old Sells-Floto show, and have taken pictures of Clara since she was barely two years old. She is now seven.

The promised Historical article by Art Stensvad evidently strayed elsewhere, due to Holiday rush, so this issue has been made up entirely by the president, in order that the appearance of SPEC should not be further delayed. We have definite guarantee of interesting items for next issue, and policy of including glossy photos as illustrations will start then. Let us know what YOU would like to see in SPEC. We'll get it if possible. DS.

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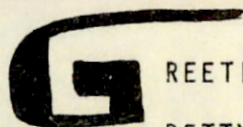
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